

Winter Use Plan and EIS

Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Memorial Parkway



Newsletter – September 2005

The National Park Service (NPS) has begun preparation of a long-term plan for managing winter recreational use in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Memorial Parkway. The initial public scoping phase of this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process closed on September 1, 2005. The next public comment opportunity will be when the Draft EIS is released in Spring 2006.

WHAT WORK IS BEING COMPLETED NOW?

The NPS is currently working to:

- Finalize Memorandum of Understanding with each Cooperating Agency
- Finalize and initiate a Public Information and Participation Plan
- Complete technical review of monitoring reports from 2004- 2005
- Post monitoring reports to website after review process is completed
- Analyze scoping comments
- Draft alternatives for consideration
- Respond to ongoing litigation

DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

A number of different alternatives will be considered, including alternatives that will consider various limits on the number of snowmobiles that may enter the parks on a daily basis, allowing for some unguided or non- commercially guided

snowmobile use, and allowing for only mass-transit snowcoach use. Comments received during the scoping process may reveal other alternatives for consideration as well.

The Winter Use Plan will evaluate the impacts of road grooming on bison and other ungulates, and consider whether or not groomed oversnow roads facilitate bison movement to locations outside Yellowstone National Park. To assess this issue, the EIS will include alternatives that would leave some road segments ungroomed for research purposes and/or experimental designs to determine the effects of oversnow roads on bison and other ungulates.

TIMELINE

Draft EIS released with 60- day public comment.....	Spring 2006
Proposed regulation with 60- day public comment.....	Spring 2006
Final EIS.....	Spring 2007
Record of decision.....	Summer 2007
Final regulation.....	Summer 2007
Decision implemented.....	December 2007

For more information, please visit: www.nps.gov/yell/winteruse.htm

You may also contact Yellowstone National Park at: 307-244-2019.

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